

Year-Round Children's Reading Program at the Roanoke Public Library

**Thursday, September 20, 2012
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM**

presented by

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Value of Reading Programs

Participants

- encourages reading for pleasure
- helps to retain and enhance reading skills
- encourages family reading activities

Library

- helps create a love of libraries
- draws kids and parents into the library on a regular basis
- enhances community involvement
- helps expand programming numbers

Philosophy

**The benefits of summer
reading programs can
easily be extended to
ongoing reading programs.**

- There is often a disconnect between summer programs in the library and ongoing ones.
- Reading for pleasure should be a year-round activity.
- A year is a long time to wait for a reading program, particularly for young children.

**The goal is to encourage
reading for pleasure.**

- **Many children have little encouragement to read for pleasure.**
 - Participation in a reading program can help children with parents who don't model reading for pleasure at home. This need doesn't end in the summer.
 - Schools often don't or can't focus on reading for pleasure.

- **Let kids pick their own books.**

- Choice is important to children, especially since they have little ability to direct their own lives.
- Learning how to choose one's own books is an important skill.
- Don't put the kids in competition with each other. That will make it stressful for some.
- Remember, this is not a classroom. There are no permanent records or teacher reviews. Be flexible, and don't allow it to become a chore.

- **Don't worry about reading levels.**
 - The difficulty or sophistication level is less important than the act of reading and enjoying it.
 - The more we place reading limitations on the children, the more it will seem like work, rather than pleasure.

- **Don't limit it to books**

- Reading is reading.

- There are many formats for reading.

- Short non-fiction is often in newspaper or magazine format.

- Current non-fiction is often in newspaper or magazine format.

Work with schools if possible, but don't make the program an extension of school.

- Allow school reading to count towards your program, too.
- See if the reading children do for your program can count for extra points in school.
- Be careful to not let either of the above interfere with the main goal – learning to take pleasure in reading. Treat them as additional options in your program, not as the primary goal.

**Make the program as
hassle-free as possible, for
all involved.**

- If the program is too complicated, children and parents will feel that they don't have enough time to do it.
- If the program is too complicated, staff will feel overburdened throughout the year.
- If it takes more than a few minutes to sign up for the program, it's too complicated.

- If it takes more than a few minutes to turn in reading logs and start to claim prizes, it's too complicated.
- Make sure that there is always someone at the library who can accept reading logs and give out prizes.
- Automate as much of the staff portion of the program as possible, whenever reasonable and feasible.

Motivation

Prizes

- instant gratification
 - carnival prizes
- mid-range gratification
 - free food at local restaurants
(ex. McDonald's, Pizza Hut)
 - free activities
(ex. bowling, swimming)
 - monthly drawing prizes
- long-term gratification
 - big drawing prizes
 - finishing school reading



Recognition

- instant gratification
 - praise
 - shape with name on wall
- long-term gratification
 - achievement certificates
 - praise at school from teachers for reading skill and (possibly) finishing reading assignments early



Prizes

Inexpensive prizes



dollartree.com



orientaltrading.com



ebay.com

Inexpensive prizes



naeir.org



garage sales,
flea markets, etc.

Places to get free prizes



freecycle.com

craigslist

craigslist.com



TLA Annual Conference



advance reading copies

Kits

- inexpensive
- easy to make
- volunteers and community service workers can easily do the labor
- encourage creativity
- more “bang for the buck” than small toys

Necklace Kits



Foam Beads
~ \$10.00 for 500



Pony Beads
~ \$10.00 for 1,000



Black Satin String
~ \$10.00 for 100 yards



Small Zipper Bags
~ \$4.00 for 500

= 200 kits for \$0.17 each

Refrigerator Magnet Kits



Craft Foam (regular and sticky-backed)



Magnetic Tape



Sandwich Bags



Accucut Shapes



Hole punch (not in kits)

Shadow Puppet Kits



Accucut Shapes



Flexible Drinking Straws



Written Instructions



1 Gallon Resealable Bags

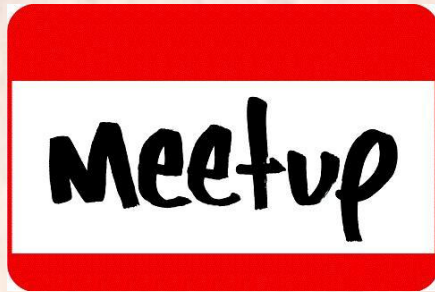
Advertising

**Target advertising towards
those who generally
don't participate in
library programs, or
even use the library.**

Traditional

- library newsletters and fliers
- city and/or library websites
- school newsletters or handouts
- local newspapers and magazines
- local businesses
- daycare facilities

Other



[meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com)

craigslist

[craigslist.com](https://www.craigslist.com)



comic and gaming stores

Mechanics

Measurement

- Stick to one type of measurement on reading logs. Books, pages, and time are the three most common.
- Time tends to be the most “fair” when dealing with a wide range of ages, but is more difficult for younger children to calculate.

Record-keeping

- Keep records in a spreadsheet or database, and update them as the children turn in their reading logs.
- Common fields are:
 - name
 - age
 - gender
 - school
 - grade
 - address
 - town
 - contact information
 - number of books, pages, or hours/minutes read

Record-keeping continued

- Choose the fields on the basis of your statistical/reporting needs, ease of avoiding conflicting data, and other functional factors. Don't collect more information than necessary.
- It helps to use the same record-keeping system and basic fields for both the summer reading program and the ongoing yearly one.
- Microsoft Excel and Access make data accessible and portable on a wide range of computers. Save files in the 1997-2003 version of the formats when possible.

Evaluation

- Participation statistics help to demonstrate the value of library programs.
- Resist the urge to evaluate individual participants. Don't measure "progress" of children.
- Data regarding age, school, and general location may be useful when it comes to targeting advertising and other forms of promotion.

Studies and Statistics

Summer Reading Studies

California Library Association

<http://tinyurl.com/8ot2lwh>

New York State Library

The Importance of Summer Reading: Public Library

Summer Reading Programs and Learning

<http://tinyurl.com/yqkmdq>

School Library Journal

Summer Reading Programs Boost Student Achievement, Study Says

<http://tinyurl.com/3a5vm7n>

United We Serve

<http://www.serve.gov/strongminds.asp>